

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS20533

The proposed legislation seeks to require the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to verify and account for the number of dependent children being claimed on applications for public assistance. This is to be accomplished by providing a copy of a birth certificate for each dependent child being claimed.

Idaho Code 67-7903 states that citizens eighteen (18) years of age and older who seek public assistance must provide proof of "lawful presence". However, in most instances, this does not apply to children under eighteen (18) years of age.

This bill is not intended to cause applicants to provide immigration or lawful presence status of their minor children or for themselves. Rather, it seeks to determine that the number of dependent children being claimed is the actual number of children which exist.

A loophole currently exists, which allows for an indiscriminate number of minor dependents to be claimed, without having to provide proof of their existence. This proposed legislation will close that loophole.

FISCAL NOTE

No negative impact to the general fund is expected. Rather, the purpose of this legislation will help to deter the amount of fraudulent dependent claims. The consequences of this action may result in a positive return to the general fund.

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